

ANF\mass murder mystery.1
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Mass Murder Mystery

For fifty years I have been investigating a crime that has never yet been committed.

The crime in question--the execution of existing US or Russian nuclear war plans--would involve mass homicide so vast that: (i) no killing of this magnitude has ever occurred; (ii) it could not physically have been accomplished until about fifty years ago; (iii) it could not be carried out more than once in human history, perhaps twice (the second time, after a long interval, in the southern hemisphere).

It will thus be a crime of mass murder. "Crime," and "murder," because the implementation of these existing plans, using existing nuclear arsenals, would necessarily violate fundamental moral codes and specific international law, ratified in treaties, forbidding homicide even in wartime so indiscriminate, so grotesquely disproportionate to legitimate ends, largely targeted on civilians, disregarding of the rights and survival of neutrals and non-combatants, and permanently destructive of the environment.

Or perhaps these legalistic categories--conceived prior to the nuclear era, though still relevant and binding--seem inadequate, unnecessary and euphemistic in this context. It might seem gratuitous even to use the notion of "crime" in connection with decisions that set in motion the destruction of most life in the northern hemisphere, and perhaps the globe.

Moreover, these decisions would almost surely be taken in good conscience, with no awareness of criminal intent or culpability in the minds of the perpetrators, who would include the most prestigious governmental elites. They would have in mind justifications of national security, of "supreme emergency," that would seem to them, at the time, totally to overshadow both legal and underlying moral considerations.

They would be mistaken in these beliefs, as would be evident to any survivors (say, in the southern hemisphere). Just how they could so delude themselves is one of the things that needs investigating, preferably before the event. What real motives could generate such a delusional system and trigger such murderous, suicidal and catastrophic responses in intelligent, successful men of affairs? How could they have gained societal acceptance and widespread participation for their preparations? Those are among the mysteries I have been exploring for half a century.

My purpose in investigating is not to condemn, convict or punish anyone for past or future crimes. In any case, it is not a crime that, once executed, could ever be subject to prosecution,; neither prosecutors nor defendants, judges or juries would continue to exist. At most, officials who are now or soon may be—like several generations of officials before them--contemplating and threatening such mass murder and actively preparing to carry it out at some time of choice could be indicted for conspiracy.

My purpose is to help *avert* this crime: to warn potential victims, ongoing bystanders and facilitators, and potential perpetrators of the urgent need for active rejection of these plans and preparations and the threats, policies and mindset that have led to them.